CHAPTER 3
SECTION 2.9

SILICONE OR SALINE BREAST IMPLANT REMOVAL

Issue Date: June 30, 1993
Authority: 32 CFR 199.4(a)(1), (e)(8)(iv), and (e)(9)

I. PROCEDURE CODES

19328 and 19330

II. DESCRIPTION

The removal of silicone or saline mammary implant material.

III. POLICY

A. Benefits may be allowed for removal of silicone or saline breast implants if the initial silicone or saline breast implantation was or would have been a covered benefit (refer to Chapter 3, Section 2.6).

B. Removal of silicone or saline breast implants must be considered medically necessary. Signs or symptoms of complications must be present and documented. Current medical literature supports removal of silicone or saline breast implants for the following indications:

1. Signs and symptoms that may signal implant rupture; and

2. Capsular contracture.

C. Either of these indications may be manifested by changes in firmness, size, shape, or color of the implanted breast.

D. Current medical literature does not support removal of silicone or saline breast implants for the presence of autoimmune or connective tissue disorders.

IV. EXCEPTIONS

A. If the initial silicone or saline breast implant surgery was for an indication not covered or coverable, benefits for implant removal may be allowed only if it is necessary treatment of a complication which represents a separate medical condition. Systemic infection is an example of a separate medical condition.

B. In the case of implants not originally covered or coverable, implant damage, hardening, leakage, and autoimmune disorder do not qualify as separate medical conditions. They are considered unfortunate sequelae resulting from the initial non-covered surgery, therefore, benefits may not be allowed.

C. Medical review is required in order to determine if a separate medical condition was present, and/or to determine if implant removal was medically necessary.

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